Foreward

How Forecasts Are Made

Most of the annual streamflow in the Western United States originates as snowfall. This snowfall accumulates high in the mountains during winter and early spring. As the snowpack accumulates, hydrologists estimate the runoff that will occur when it melts. Predictions are based on careful measurements of snow water equivalent at selected index points. Precipitation, temperature, soil moisture and antecedent streamflow data are viewed in conjunction with snowpack data to prepare runoff forecasts. This report presents a comprehensive picture of water supply outlook conditions for areas dependent upon surface runoff. It includes selected streamflow forecasts, summarized snowpack and precipitation data, reservoir storage data and narratives describing current conditions.

Streamflow forecasts are cooperatively generated by Soil Conservation Service and National Weather Service hydrologists. Forecasts become more accurate as more data affecting runoff becomes known. For this reason, forecasts are issued that reflect three future precipitation conditions — Below Normal, Average, and Above Normal. These forecasts are termed reasonable minimum, most probable, and reasonable maximum. Actual streamflow can be expected to fall between the lower and upper forecast values eight out of ten years.

Snowpack data are obtained by using a combination of manual and automated measurement methods. Manual readings of snow depth and water equivalent are taken at locations called snow courses on a monthly or semi-monthly schedule during the winter. In addition, snow water equivalent, precipitation, temperature, and other parameters are monitored on a daily basis and transmitted via radio telemetry to central data collection facilities. Both monthly and daily data are used to project snowmelt runoff.

For More Information

Copies of Monthly Water Supply Outlook Reports and other reports may be obtained from the states listed below. Because of the limited space, snow survey measurements are not published in monthly reports. An annual snow survey data summary is published by the Soil Conservation Service for each of the western states. Historical snow survey data may be obtained at those same offices.

STATE	ADDRESS
Alaska	201 East 9th Ave., Suite 300, Anchorage, AK 99501-3687
Arizona	201 East Indianola, Suite 200, Phoenix, AZ 85012
Colorado (New Mexico)	2490 West 26th Ave., Denver, CO 80211
Idaho	304 North 8th Street, Room 345, Boise, ID 83702
Montana	10 East Babcock, Room 443, Federal Building, Bozeman, MT 59715
Nevada	50 South Virginia Street, Third Floor, Reno, NV 89505
Oregon	1220 Southwest 3rd Ave., 16th Floor, Portland, OR 97204
Utah	4402 Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84147
Washington	360 U.S. Court House, Spokane, WA 99201
Wyoming	Federal Building, 100 East "B" Street, Casper, WY 82602

In addition to state reports, a Water Supply Outlook for the Western United States is published by the Soil Conservation Service and National Weather Service monthly, January through May. Reports may be obtained from the Soil Conservation Service, West National Technical Center, 511 Northwest Broadway, Room 547, Portland, OR 97209.

Published by other agencies:

Water Supply Outlook Reports prepared by other agencies include: California — Snow Survey Branch, California Department of Water Resources, P.O. Box 388, Sacramento, CA 95802; British Columbia — The Ministry of Environment, Water Investigations Branch, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, British Columbia, V8V 1X5; Yukon Territory — Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Northern Operations Branch, 200 Range Road, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Y1A 3V1; Alberta, Saskatchewan, and N.W.T. — The Water Survey of Canada, Inland Waters Branch, 110-12 Avenue S.W., Calgary, Alberta, T3C 1A6.

Arizona
Water Supply Outlook

and

Federal-State-Private
Cooperative Snow Surveys

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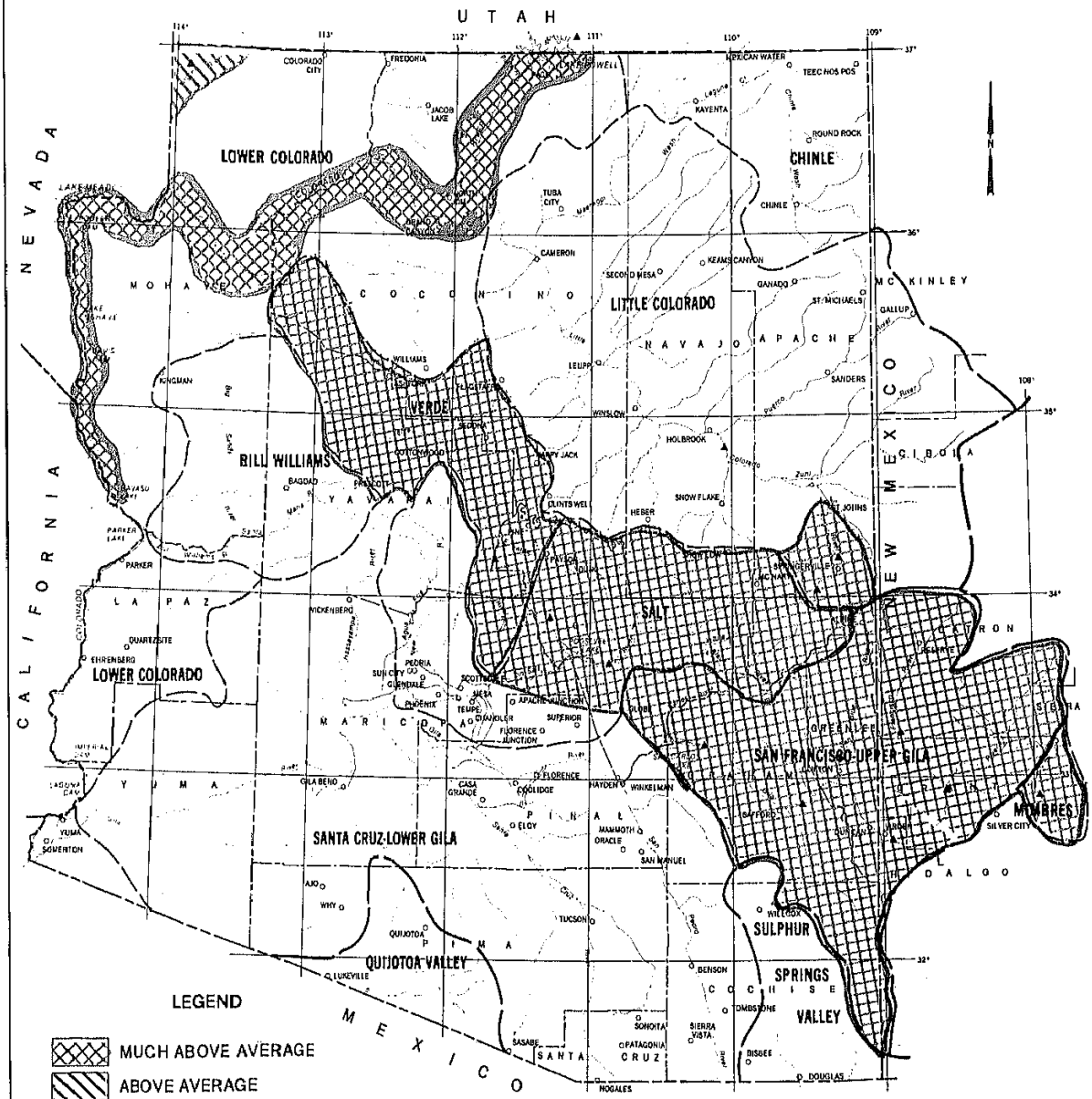
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE



STREAMFLOW PROSPECTS

ARIZONA

SOURCE: Data compiled by SCS Field Personnel.

MARCH 1985 4-R-39105

USDA SCS/TCAS NORTH TEXAS 1985

GENERAL OUTLOOK

SUMMARY: March precipitation and snowmelt produced an increase in streamflow for the month, but the April-May outlook still calls for below average runoff. The April 1 snowpack was much below average and little snow is left except in the San Francisco Peaks, the Chuska Mountains, and the interior parts of the White Mountains. The Salt River is forecast to run 51% of average, Tonto Creek 42% and the Verde River 44%. The San Francisco River should run in the 60% range and the Gila 60%-65%. The Little Colorado is forecast at 68% at Greer and 54% at Lyman Reservoir. Inflow to Lake Powell is forecast to be 144% of average over the April-July period.

SNOWPACK: Much below average snowpack remains on April 1. Snow surveys and telemetry data showed that the snowpack of Arizona and western New Mexico had continued its up and down pattern during March just as it had all winter beginning in late November. Dry conditions in December and January, coupled with periods of warm temperatures depleted the snow from November. Snow received from early and mid February storms melted due to much above average temperatures in late February. Early and mid March storms again built up the mountain snow only to have it melt from another period of warm weather. Only special areas such as the San Francisco Peaks and the Chuska Mountains deviated very much from this pattern.

Snowpack - Percent of Average

Basin	March 1	March 15	April 1
Salt River	34	51	23
Verde River	23	40	29
San Francisco/ Gila River	38	53	25
Little Colorado River	40	37	15
Grand Canyon	63	79	58
Mimbres River	7	73	0
San Francisco Peaks	99	97	106
Chuska Mountains (est.)	90	82	73

PRECIPITATION: Precipitation during March was above average on all forecast basins, ranging from 105% on the lower Colorado River area of northwestern Arizona to 162% on the Mimbres watershed in New Mexico. Most of this precipitation came during the first three weeks of the month with a major storm from March 15 to 18. The general March precipitation and temperature pattern was almost a duplicate of that experienced in February.

RESERVOIRS: April 1 reservoir storage is above average and most large water supply impoundments are nearly full. The Salt River Project system reported 97% of capacity storage with 1,966,000 acre feet. San Carlos was 97% full with 905,000 acre feet. Lake Pleasant held 89,000 acre feet at 57% of capacity. A combined storage of 47,513,000 acre feet was being held in Lakes Powell Mead, Mohave, and Havasu, accounting for 89% of their capacity. Smaller reservoirs increased their storage from March runoff. Lyman Lake reported 27,400 acre feet in storage. Show Low Lake held 3100 acre feet. Watson Lake and Willow Lake each held 4400 acre feet.

STREAMFLOW: Streamflow increased during March in response to a two edged condition remininiscent of February. Rain from the storms of early and mid March produced increased streamflow while snow was building at the higher elevations. When the weather cleared near the 19th, abnormally warm temperatures set in and accelerated snow melt resulted. Streamflow volumes increased further. Many streams produced normal to above normal runoff for the month.

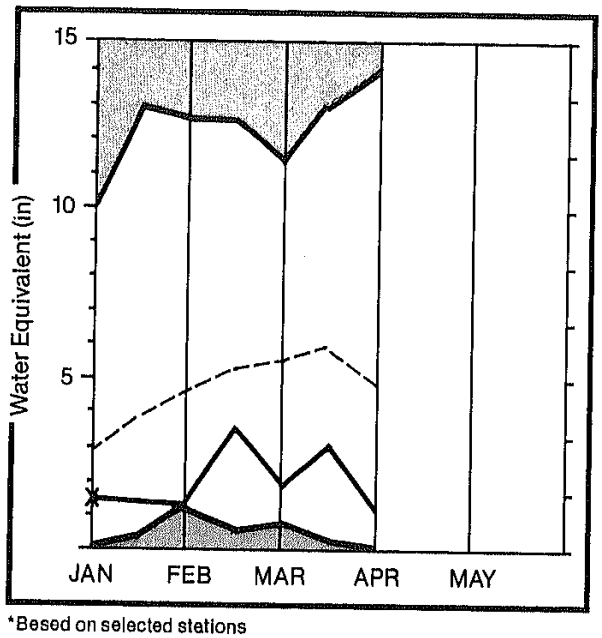
Preliminary Streamflow Observations
March, 1986

Stream	1000's acre feet	Percent of average
Salt River	152.2	121
Verde River	96.5	96
Tonto Creek	44.4	130
Gila River		
Virden	24.8	94
Solomon	41.4	74
Calva	37.8	90
San Fransico River		
Clifton	17.3	69

All streamflow forecasts are coordinated between the Soil Conservation Service and the National Weather Service. All averages and percentages of average are based on the 20 year period 1961-1980.

Salt River Basin

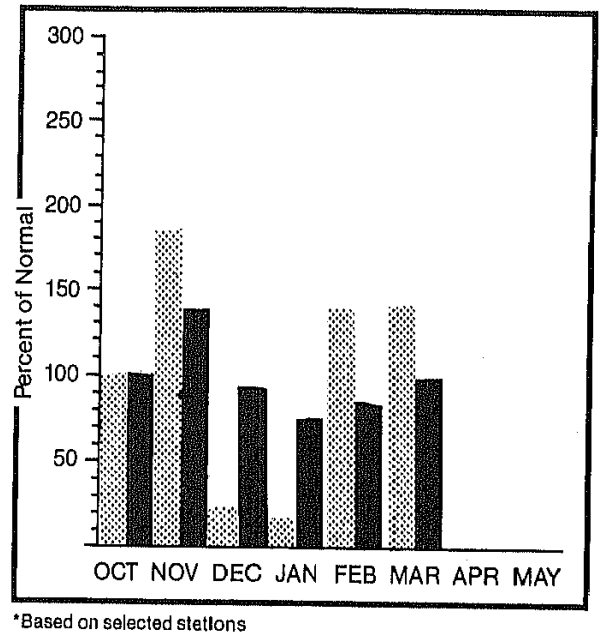
Mountain snowpack* (inches)



*Besed on selected stations

Maximum
Minimum
Average
Current

Precipitation* (percent of normal)



*Based on selected stations

Monthly precipitation
Year to date precipitation

April 1, 1986

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK:

The Salt River is forecast to produce 51% of average runoff and Tonto Creek, 42% over the April-May period. March precipitation was 140% of average but the April 1 snowpack was only 23% of average. Warm temperatures in late March melted much of the snow. This, coupled with rain runoff, produced above average March streamflow. Salt River Project reservoirs on the Salt River were 99% full on April 1 with 1,687,000 acre feet in storage. Lake Pleasant reported 89,000 acre feet at 57% of capacity.

For further information contact your local Soil Conservation Service office.

SALT RIVER BASIN

STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

FORECAST POINT	FORECAST PERIOD	20 YR. AVE. (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (% AVE.)	MEAS. MAX. (% AVE.)	MEAS. MIN. (% AVE.)	MEAN FLOW (CFS)	PEAK DATE	LOW FLOW (CFS)	LOW DATE
SALT RIVER near Roosevelt	APR-MAY	204.1	105.0	51	117	21				
	APRIL	130.7	73.0	55						
TONTO CREEK near Roosevelt	APR-MAY	14.2	6.0	42	134	14				
	APRIL	11.2	5.0	45						

RESERVOIR STORAGE (1000AF)

RESERVOIR	USEABLE CAPACITY	** USEABLE STORAGE ** THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR	AVE.
SALT RIVER RES SYSTEM	1709.0	1467.1	1452.6	1283.0
LAKE PLEASANT	157.6	99.8	122.9	85.0

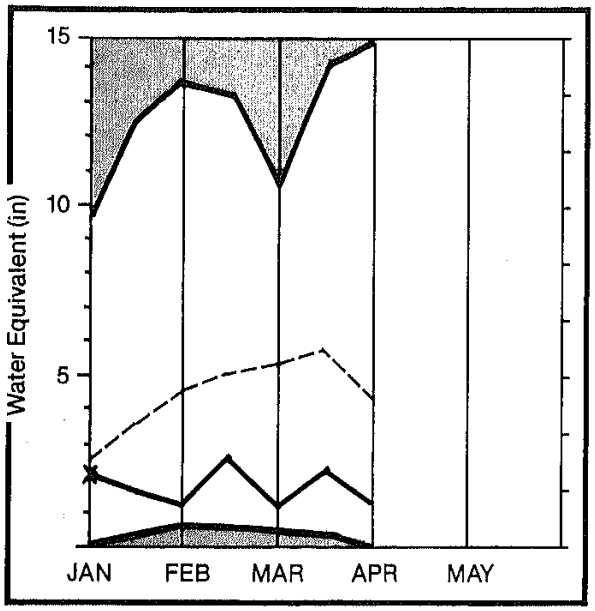
WATERSHED SNOWPACK ANALYSIS

WATERSHED	NO. COURSES AVE.D	THIS YEAR AS % OF LAST YR.	THIS YEAR AS % OF AVERAGE
SALT RIVER	8	25	22

*Corrected for upstream diversions or changes in reservoir storage.
Average is for 1961-80 period.

Verde River Basin

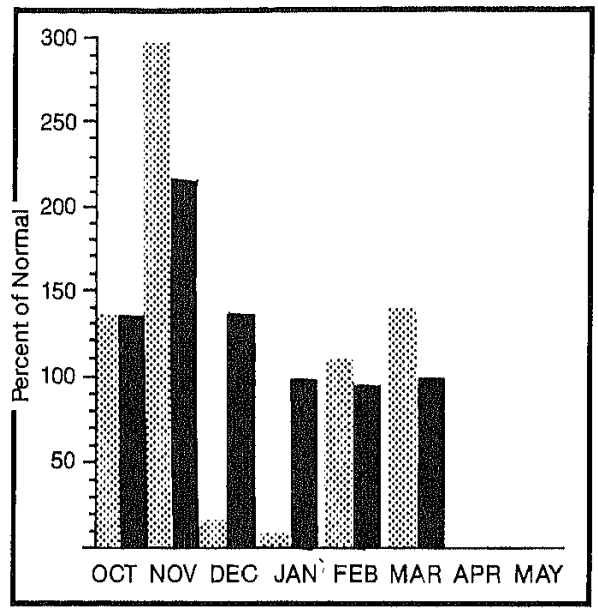
Mountain snowpack* (inches)



*Based on selected stations

Maximum
Minimum
Average
Current

Precipitation* (percent of normal)



*Based on selected stations

Monthly precipitation
Year to date precipitation

April 1, 1986

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK:

The April-May forecast on the Verde river calls for 44% of average runoff. Five hundred acre feet or less is expected to enter Lake Mary or flow in Granite or Willow Creek. March precipitation was 139% of average which produced near average runoff on the Verde River for the month. Even though snow was deposited on the basin, most of it melted by late March. The April 1 snowpack was only 29% of average. Because of its higher elevation the San Francisco Peaks snow was still 106% of average. Salt River Project reservoirs on the Verde River had an April 1 storage of 279,000 acre feet at 90% of capacity. Watson and Willow Lakes each held 4400 acre feet.

For further information contact your local Soil Conservation Service office.

VERDE RIVER BASIN

STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

FORECAST POINT	FORECAST PERIOD	20 YR. AVE. (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (% AVE.)	REAS. MAX. (% AVE.)	REAS. MIN. (% AVE.)	PEAK FLOW (CFS)	PEAK DATE	LOW FLOW (CFS)	LOW DATE
VERDE RIVER above Horseshoe	APR-MAY	81.1	36.0	44	171	17				
	APRIL	65.6	26.0	39						
GRANITE CREEK	APR-MAY	---	0.5							
WILLOW CREEK	APR-MAY	---	0.4							
LAKE MARY INFLOW	APR-MAY	---	0.3							

RESERVOIR STORAGE (1000AF)

RESERVOIR	USEABLE CAPACITY	** USEABLE STORAGE ** THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR	AVE.
VERDE RIVER RES SYSTEM	309.6	278.6	308.6	162.9
WATSON LAKE	4.7	4.4	4.5	3.6
WILLOW CREEK	6.1	4.4	6.1	3.5

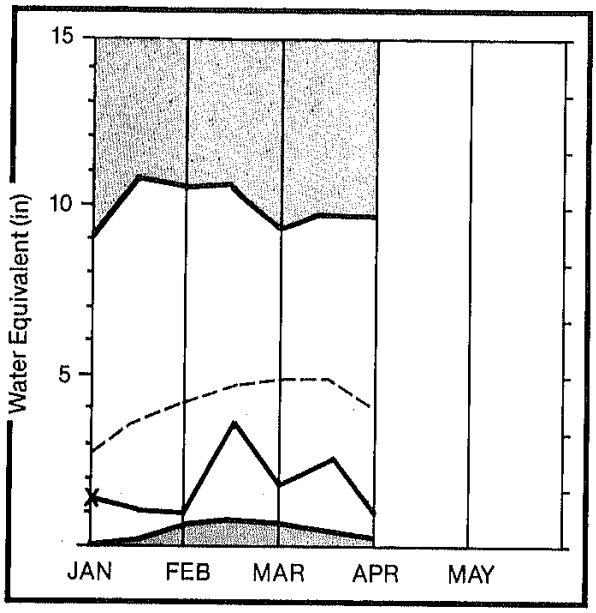
WATERSHED SNOWPACK ANALYSIS

WATERSHED	NO. COURSES AVE.0	THIS YEAR AS % OF LAST YR.	AVERAGE
VERDE RIVER	10	29	28
SAN FRANCISCO PEAKS	4	75	106

*Corrected for upstream diversions or changes in reservoir storage.
Average is for 1961-80 period.

San Francisco - Upper Gila River Basin

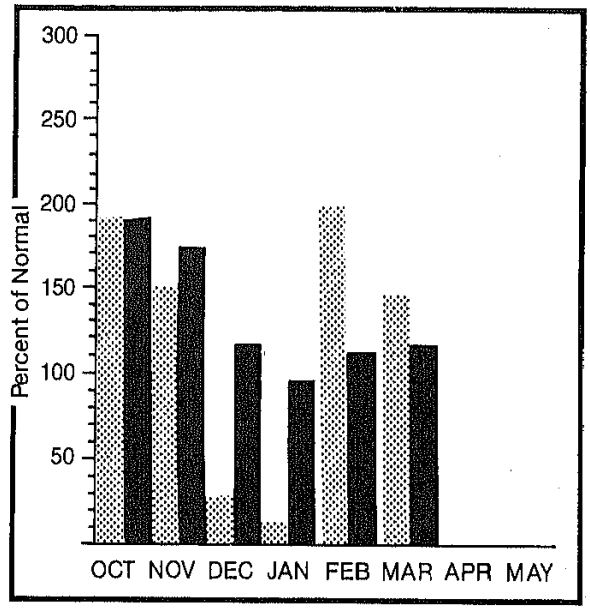
Mountain snowpack* (inches)



*Based on selected stations

Maximum
Minimum
Average
Current

Precipitation* (percent of normal)



*Based on selected stations

Monthly precipitation
Year to date precipitation

April 1, 1986

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK:

Below average April-May streamflow is forecast on the Gila basin. The San Francisco River is only expected to produce 61% of average at Clifton. The Gila River is forecast to run 65% at Virden, 59% at Head of Safford Valley, and only 26% at Calva. March precipitation was 146% of average over the basin. Warm temperatures in late March melted much of the snow and the April 1 snowpack was only 25% of average. March runoff was below to near average even with the precipitation and snowmelt. San Carlos reservoir was 97% full on April 1 with 905,000 acre feet in storage.

For further information contact your local Soil Conservation Service office.

SAN FRANCISCO - UPPER GILA RIVER BASIN

STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

FORECAST POINT	FORECAST PERIOD	20 YR. AVE. (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (% AVE.)	REAS. MAX. (% AVE.)	REAS. MIN. (% AVE.)	PEAK FLOW (CFS)	PEAK DATE	LOW FLOW (CFS)	LOW DATE
SAN FRANCISCO RIVER at Glenwood	APR-MAY	15.4	10.0	64	214	26				
SAN FRANCISCO RIVER at Clifton	APR-MAY	31.0	19.0	61	271	26				
GILA RIVER at Gila	APR-MAY	23.7	16.0	67	152	25				
GILA RIVER near Virden	APR-MAY	27.5	18.0	65	167	25				
GILA RIVER near Solomon	APR-MAY	57.0	34.0	59	277	25				
	APRIL	37.3	24.0	64						
GILA RIVER at Calva (unadjusted)	APR-MAY	37.4	10.0	26	227	11				

RESERVOIR STORAGE (1000AF)

RESERVOIR	USEABLE CAPACITY	xx USEABLE STORAGE xx THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR	AVE.
SAN CARLOS	935.0	905.4	943.9	820.2
PAINTED ROCK DAM	2492.0	0.0	276.2	---

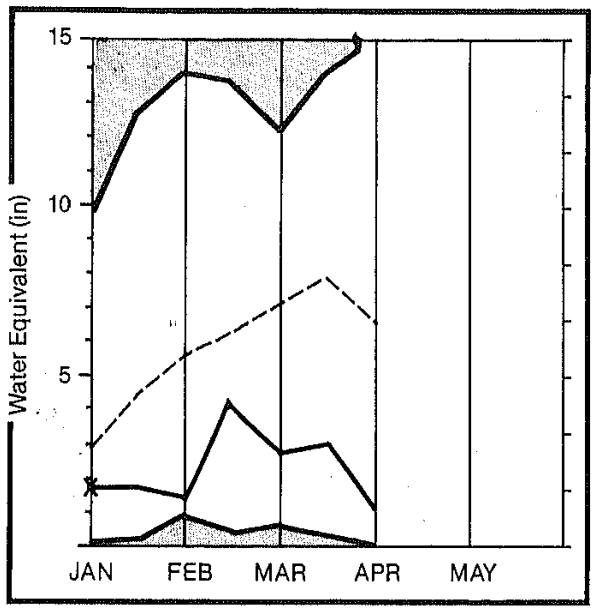
WATERSHED SNOWPACK ANALYSIS

WATERSHED	NO. COURSES AVE.D	THIS YEAR AS % OF LAST YR.	THIS YEAR AS % OF AVERAGE
SAN FRANCISCO/GILA RIVER	7	24	25

xCorrected for upstream diversions or changes in reservoir storage.
Average is for 1961-80 period.

Little Colorado River Basin

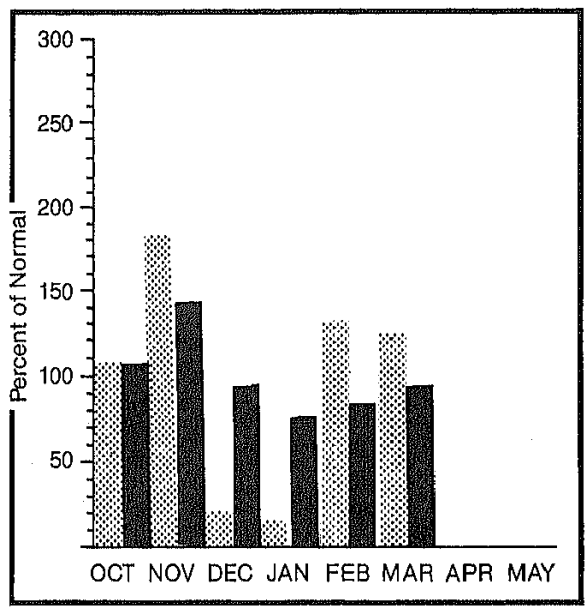
Mountain snowpack* (Inches)



*Based on selected stations

Maximum
Minimum
Average
Current

Precipitation* (percent of normal)



*Based on selected stations

Monthly precipitation
Year to date precipitation

April 1, 1986

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK: April-June runoff on the upper Little Colorado River is forecast to be 68% of average at Greer and 54% at Lyman Reservoir. Precipitation in March was 125% of average. The snowpack built up during March but almost immediately melted. The April 1 snowpack was 15% of average. The Chuska Mountains are estimated to retain a 73% of average snowpack. Lyman Lake held 27,400 acre feet near April 1 and Show Low Lake, 3100 acre feet.

For further information contact your local Soil Conservation Service office.

LITTLE COLORADO RIVER BASIN

STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

FORECAST POINT	FORECAST PERIOD	20 YR. AVE. (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (% AVE.)	REAS. MAX. (% AVE.)	REAS. MIN. (% AVE.)	PEAK FLOW (CFS)	PEAK DATE	LOW FLOW (CFS)	LOW DATE
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER at Greer	APR-JUN	7.0	4.8	68	143	29				
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER ab Lyman Res	APR-JUN	11.0	6.0	54	127	18				
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER at Woodruff x	MAY-JUN	17.3	6.0	34	104	12				

RESERVOIR STORAGE (1000AF)

RESERVOIR	USEABLE CAPACITY	xx USEABLE STORAGE xx THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR	AVE.
LYMAN RESERVOIR	---	27.4	30.0	---
SHON LOW LAKE	5.1	3.1	5.1	---

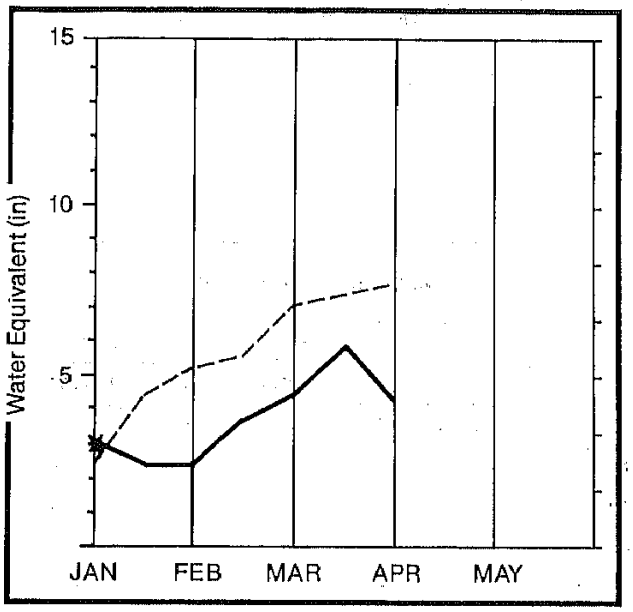
WATERSHED SNOWPACK ANALYSIS

WATERSHED	NO. COURSES AVE.D	THIS YEAR AS % OF LAST YR.	THIS YEAR AS % OF AVERAGE
LITTLE COLORADO RIVER	5	17	10
CHUSKA MOUNTAINS	5	92	79

xCorrected for upstream diversions or changes in reservoir storage.
Average is for 1961-80 period.

Lower Colorado River Basin

Mountain snowpack* (inches)

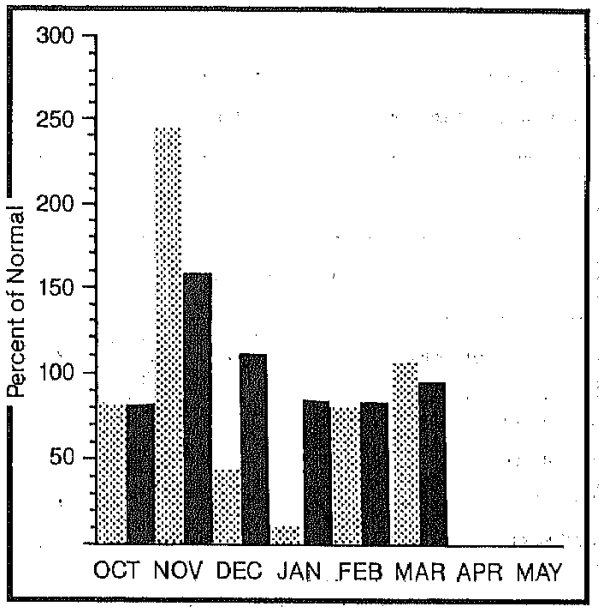


*Based on selected stations

Maximum ———— Average – – – –

Minimum ———— Current ————

Precipitation* (percent of normal)



*Based on selected stations

Monthly precipitation ▒ Year to date precipitation ■

April 1, 1986

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK: The Colorado River is forecast to produce 10,800,000 acre feet inflow to Lake Powell at 144% of average for April-July. The Virgin River at Littlefield is forecast to run 96% of average over the April-June period. Northwestern Arizona received 105% of average precipitation during March. The April 1 snowpack in the Grand Canyon area was only 58% of average. Reservoir storage on April 1 for Lakes Powell, Mead, Mohave, and Havasu totaled 47,513,000 acre feet at 89% of capacity.

For further information contact your local Soil Conservation Service office.

LOWER COLORADO RIVER BASIN

STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

FORECAST POINT	FORECAST PERIOD	20 YR. AVE. (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (% AVE.)	REAS. MAX. (% AVE.)	REAS. MIN. (% AVE.)	PEAK FLOW (CFS)	PEAK DATE	LOW FLOW (CFS)	LOW DATE
VIRGIN RIVER near Littlefield	APR-JUN	62.0	60.0	96	127	77				
INFLOW to LAKE POWELL *	APR-JUL	7462.0	10800.0	144	173	120				

RESERVOIR STORAGE (1000AF)

RESERVOIR	USEABLE CAPACITY	** USEABLE STORAGE ** THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR	AVE.
LAKE HAVASU	619.4	558.8	573.0	558.0
LAKE MOHAVE	1810.0	1645.2	1732.6	1644.0
LAKE HEAD	24159.0	22279.0	23661.0	18170.0
LAKE POWELL	25002.0	22614.0	21998.0	11200.0

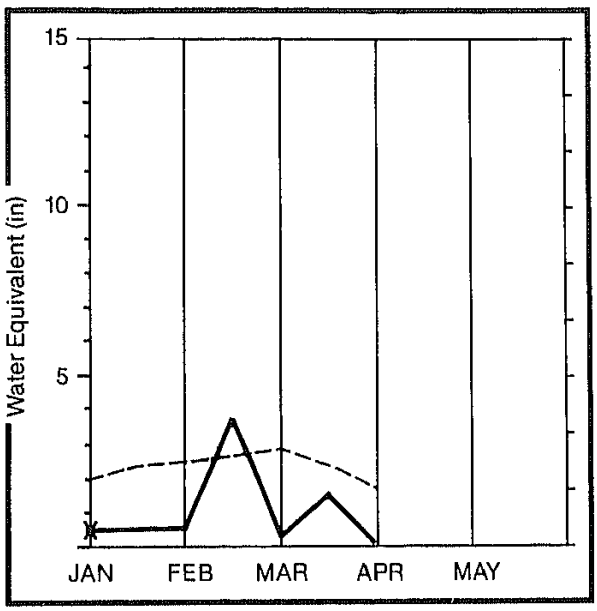
WATERSHED SNOWPACK ANALYSIS

WATERSHED	NO. COURSES AVE.0	THIS YEAR AS % OF LAST YR.	THIS YEAR AS % OF AVERAGE
LOWER COLORADO RIVER	2	91	90

*Corrected for upstream diversions or changes in reservoir storage.
Average is for 1961-80 period.

Mimbres River Basin

Mountain snowpack* (inches)

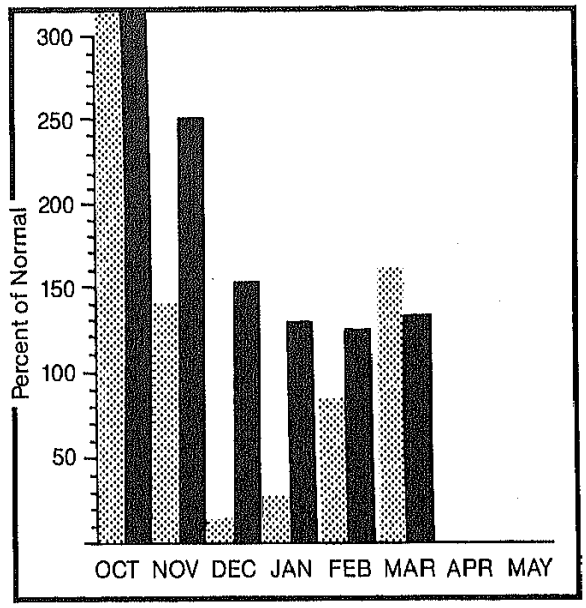


*Based on selected stations

Maximum ———— Average – – – –

Minimum ———— Current ————

Precipitation* (percent of normal)



*Based on selected stations

Monthly precipitation ▒ Year to date precipitation ■

April 1, 1986

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK: Light runoff is expected on the Mimbres River during April-May. The forecast calls for only 500 acre feet or 25% of average. March precipitation was 162% of average but this has already run off. The snowpack on the Mimbres watershed was essentially gone as of April 1.

For further information contact your local Soil Conservation Service office.

MIMBRES RIVER BASIN

STREAMFLOW FORECASTS

FORECAST POINT	FORECAST PERIOD	20 YR. AVE. (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (1000AF)	MOST PROBABLE (% AVE.)	REAS. MAX. (% AVE.)	REAS. MIN. (% AVE.)	PEAK FLOW (CFS)	PEAK DATE	LOW FLOW (CFS)	LOW DATE
MIMBRES RIVER near Mimbres	APR-MAY	2.0	0.5	25	150	10				

RESERVOIR STORAGE (1000AF)

RESERVOIR	USEABLE CAPACITY	** USEABLE STORAGE ** THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR	AVE.

WATERSHED SNOWPACK ANALYSIS

WATERSHED	NO. COURSES AVE.0	THIS YEAR AS % OF LAST YR.	AVERAGE
MIMBRES RIVER	3	0	0

*Corrected for upstream diversions or changes in reservoir storage.
Average is for 1961-80 period.

DATA SITES USED TO DETERMINE SNOW PACK WATER

SALT RIVER

Baldy
Beaverhead
Coronado Trail
Forest Dale Alternate
Hannagan Meadows
Heber
Maverick Fork
Workman Creek

VERDE RIVER

Baker Butte
Baker Butte #2
Chalender
Copper Basin Divide
Fort Valley
Gaddes Canyon
Happy Jack
Mingus Mountain
Morman Mountain
Mormon Mt. Summit #2
White Horse Lake Jct.
Williams Ski Run

GILA/SAN FRANCISCO RIVER

Beaverhead
Coronado Trail
Frisco Divide
Hannagan Meadows
Signal Peak Snotel
Silver Creek Divide
State Line

LITTLE COLORADO RIVER

Baldy
Cheese Spring
Heber
Nutrioso
Promontory Butte

LOWER COLORADO RIVER

Bright Angel
Grand Canyon

SAN FRANCISCO PEAKS

Inner Basin #1
Inner Basin #2
Snow Bowl #1 Alternate
Snow Bowl #2

CHUSKA MOUNTAINS

Bowl Canyon
Tsaile Canyon #1
Tsaile Canyon #2
Wheatfields
Whiskey Creek

MIMBRES RIVER

Emory Pass #2
McKnight Cabin
Signal Peak Snotel

STATIONS USED TO DETERMINE PERCENT OF NORMAL PRECIPITATION

SALT RIVER

Alpine R.S.
Baldy Snotel
Black River Pumps
Buck Spring Snotel
Coronado Trail Snotel
Hannagan Meadows Snotel
Heber Snotel
Maverick Fork Snotel
Pleasant Valley R.S.
Promontory Snotel
Sierra Ancha
Tonto Fish Hatchery
Wildcat Snotel
Workman Creek Snotel

LITTLE COLORADO RIVER

Baldy Snotel
Buck Spring Snotel
Flagstaff
Heber Snotel
Holbrook
Mormon Mountain Snotel
Promontory Snotel
Springerville
Tuba City
Window Rock

LOWER COLORADO RIVER

Bright Angel
Colorado City
Fredonia
Grand Canyon
Kingman
Page
Williams

VERDE RIVER

Ashfork
Baker Butte Snotel
Beaver Creek R.S.
Copper Basin Divide
Flagstaff
Fort Valley
Fry Snotel
Happy Jack
Mingus Mountain
Mormon Mountain Snotel
Payson R.S.
Prescott
Sugar Loaf Snotel
White Horse Lake Snotel

GILA/SAN FRANCISCO RIVER

Alpine R.S.
Beaverhead R.S.
Clifton
Coronado Trail Snotel
Frisco Divide Snotel
Hannagan Meadows Snotel
Lookout Mountain Snotel
Luna R.S.
Reserve R.S.
Safford Exp. Farm
Signal Peak Snotel
Silver City
Silver Creek Divide Snotel
Fort Bayard

MIMBRES RIVER

Mimbres R.S.
Signal Peak Snotel

The Following Organizations Cooperate With The Soil Conservation Service in Snow Survey Work

Federal

Department of Agriculture
- Soil Conservation Service
- Forest Service
  - Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest
  - Coconino National Forest
  - Coronado National Forest
  - Gila National Forest
  - Kaibab National Forest
  - Prescott National Forest
  - Tonto National Forest
  - Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station

Department of Commerce
- NOAA, National Weather Service

Department of Interior
- Bureau of Reclamation
  - Region III
- Geological Survey
  - Arizona District
  - New Mexico District
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - Navajo Reservation
  - San Carlos Irrigation Project
- National Park Service
  - Grand Canyon National Park
- Gila Water Commissioner
  - Safford, Arizona

State

Arizona Department of Water Resources
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Arizona State Parks Board

Arizona State University
- Laboratory of Climatology
- (State Climatologist)

University of Arizona
- Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station
- Water Resource Research Center
- Department of Watershed Management

Municipal

City of Flagstaff

Irrigation Projects

Salt River Valley Water Users' Association
- Phoenix, Arizona

San Carlos Irrigation and Drainage District
- Coolidge, Arizona

Maricopa County Municipal Water Conservation District
- Peoria, Arizona

Indian Tribes

Navajo Nation
- Window Rock, Arizona

Private

Southwest Forest Industries, Inc.
- Phoenix, Arizona

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